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October 26, 2015

Director Craig Butler
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
P.O. Box 1049
Columbus, Ohio 43216-1049

Dear Mr. Butler:

As Congresswoman for Ohio's Eleventh Congressional District, I am contacting you on behalf of concerned citizens in the City of East Cleveland. As you may be aware, Arco Recycling, Inc. is a Construction & Demolition (C&D) debris site located on Noble Road in East Cleveland, which has been a focal point of fear and controversy for many residents in the city since opening one year ago.

It was initially brought to my attention in June of 2015, when many residents sought my assistance in addressing what they felt to be serious risks to their health and safety, asking for air quality testing at the site. After contacting your office and the U.S. EPA, I was told that the site did not fall under the jurisdiction of any regulatory agency and that testing was unlikely. However, air quality testing and materials sampling took place over the summer and found no traces of asbestos.

While test results for asbestos may be negative, I worry that the Arco site may pose additional health and safety risks to nearby residents that cannot be adequately reflected in an environmental report. This includes the presence of other potential pollutants, sleeplessness due to noise pollution, dirt and soot which coats the neighborhood homes and cars, and the constant stress brought about by the site's operation. Many area residents have even taken to wearing surgical masks during their daily routines to prevent excessive dust inhalation.

Aside from their health, nearby residents have also expressed concerns with the facility's potential effect on their home values. Arco is undoubtedly an eyesore, with no landscaping or aesthetics, a lack of any real infrastructure, massive debris piles 15 to 20 feet from adjacent backyards, and round-the-clock heavy traffic and activity in the open-air site. In a city already suffering from significant disinvestment and economic turmoil, the residents of East Cleveland cannot afford to risk their health, their safety, or their peace of mind.

I urge the Ohio EPA to explore all options and take the steps necessary to ensure that Arco Recycling is in compliance with any and all applicable regulations. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Marcia L. Fudge
U.S. Member of Congress

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cc: Kurt Princic, Northeast District Chief, Ohio EPA
George Baker, Commissioner, Cleveland Division of Air Quality